GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DEFENCE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1877
ANSWERED ON:14.03.2002
ALUMINIUM CASKETS
E. AHAMED;MAHBOOB ZAHEDI;SHANKERSINH VAGHELA;SWADESH CHAKRABORTTY

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Minister has written a letter to all Members of Parliament along with a booklet written by R.V. Pandit regarding aluminium caskets bought by the Defence Ministry in 1999-2000;

(b) whether the Government`s sending an individual opinion against the CAG to all MPs flouts all norms, decorums and practices followed by parliamentary democracy, Defence in particular;

(c) whether there is any precendent for forwarding the findings of an individual who castigated the CAG-the Government`s own organisation; and

(d) if not, what prompted the Minister to do so?

Answer

MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES)

(a) to (d): A Statement is attached.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART(S) (a) TO (d) OF LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1877 F(14.3.2002

The Raksha Mantri has written a letter to all the Members of Parliament, forwarding therewith a book titled `THE WHOLE TRUTH WITH ALL THE DOCUMENTS ABOUT THE ALUMINUM CASKET BOUGHT BY THE DEFENCE MINISTRY IN 1999-2000` written by Shri R.V. Pandit. This book was a journalistic endeavour of Shri Pandit and the views expressed in the book are of Shri Pandit himself.

2. Shri Pandit in this book castigates the Army and the Ministry of Defence for making minor mistakes in writing the contract for the purchase of the caskets.

3. In his letter, the Raksha Mantri has mentioned that Shri Pandit may appear to be harsh to the CAG and the Press but as one reads the booklet, it becomes obvious that he is deeply concerned about the Press (with which he is involved for more than 50 years and how it conducts itself presently) and about the institutions created under the Constitution and how they function currently. The letter also points out that now it was conclusively proved in the booklet by Shri Pandit, that the CAG Report was not entirely factual, and the Times of India report was highly exaggerated, and in parts untruthful.